

Message Text

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1068

INFO AMCONSUL CASABLANCA

AMCONSUL TANGIER

C O N F I D E N T I A L RABAT 0484

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: BEXP, PFOR, MO US

SUBJ: COMMERCIAL PRESENT FAIRS

REF: STATE 243170, 12/13/73; STATE A-9254; 11/8/73;

CASABLANCA A-57, 6/14/73

1. SUMMARY. I AM GRATIFIED THAT GUIDELINES GOVERNING USG TRADE FAIR ACTIVITY HAVE BEEN ADJUSTED TO ACCOMODATE CASES INPORTANT TO OUR POLITICAL INTERESTS. I BELIEVE THAT, IN VIEW PRESENT STATE OF U.S.-MORROCAN RELATIONS, THE NEXT CASABALNCA TRADE FAIR IN MAY, 1975, IS SUCH A CASE. ACCORDINGLY, I STONGLY RECOMMEND EARLY APPROVAL OF A TYPE B EXHIBIT, MODIFIED IF NECESSARY TO PROVIDE GREATER THAN USUAL COMMERCE SUPPORT. END SUMMARY.

2. THE BIENNIAL CASABLANCA INTERNATIONAL FAIR IS AN IMPORTANT SOCIO-EDUCATIONAL AND CULTURAL EVENT IN MOROCCO. IT IS PRODUCED BY THE GOVERNMENT WHICH REGARDS IT AS A MEANS OF PUBLICIZING BOTH ITS DOMESTIC ACHIEVEMENTS AND ITS INTERNATIONAL STATUS. THERE WERE TWENTY-SEVEN FOREIGN PAVILIONS AT THE LAST FAIR IN 1973, INCLUDING MAJOR EXHIBITS BY COUNTRY AS DIVERSE AS FRANCE, THE USSR, COMMUNIST CHINA, SPAIN AND WEST GERMANY. WHILE SHORT-TERM TRADE PROMOTION PLAYS A PART IN THESE EXHIBITS, THEY ARE ALSO REGARDED AS AN INDICCAATION OF POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC INTEREST IN MOROCCO ON THE PART OF THE EXHIBITING STATE. LARGE NUMBERS

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OF MOROCCANS VISIT THE FAIR (OVER 1 MILLION IN 1973) AND

THE SIZE AND NATURE OF THE VARIOUS EXHIBITS IS A MATTER OF KEEN LOCAL INTEREST.

3. THUS, OUR VERY MODEST \$4,000 EXHIBIT AT LAST YEAR'S FAIR WAS WIDELY MISINTERPRETED LOCALLY AS REFLECTING A LACK OF INTEREST IN MOROCCO. IN OUR LOW PROFILE PERIOD, THIS REACTION WAS ACCEPTABLE BUT IN THE IMPROVED ATMOSPHERE WHICH HAS RESULTED FROM THE SECRETARY'S VISIT, I THINK A DECISION NOT TO PARTICIPATE OR TO PARTICIPATE ON THE SAME, OVERLY MODEST SCALE AS LAST YEAR, WOULD STRIKE A DISTINCTLY SOUR, AND VERY UNFORTUNATE NOTE. BY THE SPRING OF 1975 WE SHALL, I HOPE, HAVE DEVELOPED A NEW AND MORE PROMINENT ECONOMIC AID PROGRAM, AND A THRUST TOWARD MORE U.S. PRIVATE INVESTMENT INTEREST HERE. THE 1975 FAIR WOULD THUS BE AN OPPORTUNITY FOR A SIGNIFICANT U.S. EFFORT WHICH COULD AT ONCE HIGHLIGHT THESE TRENDS IN OUR RELATIONS WITH MOROCCO, PERHAPS EXPLOIT OUR UPCOMING 200TH BIRTHDAY, AND DO SOME EFFECTIVE LONG-TERM TRADE PROMOTION IN A PROMISING LDC MARKET. ON THE OTHER HAND, ANOTHER WEAK SHOWING WOULD BE MISUNDERSTOOD AND COULD BE PREJUDICIAL TO OUR OVER-ALL POLICY INTERESTS HERE.

4. I THEREFORE BELIEVE THAT SIGNIFICANT, WELL-FINANCED U.S. PARTICIPATION IN THE 1975 CASABLANCA FAIR IS HIGHLY ADVISABLE. I RECOMMEND A TYPE B EXHIBIT MODIFIED TO PERMIT A SOMEWHAT HIGHER LEVEL OF COMMERCE EXPENDITURE. WHILE WE WOULD DO OUR UTMOST TO GENERATE SIGNIFICANT FINANCIAL PARTICIPATION BY U.S. INVESTORS NOW HERE, PAST EXPERIENCE INDICATES THAT THESE ARE TOO FEW IN NUMBER AND OFTEN TOO SMALL IN SIZE TO GIVE MUCH HELP. WE RECOMMEND RATHER A COMMERCE BUDGET AT LEAST ADEQUATE ENOUGH TO PROVIDE MORE TIME IN COUNTRY FOR THE EXHIBIT DIRECTOR, FULL PROFESSIONAL EXHIBITION SERVICES, AND PARTICULARLY RECRUITING IN THE U.S. OF NEW-MARKET AMERICAN INVESTORS AND TRADERS.

5. THIS EFFORT WOULD, OF COURSE, HAVE MY COMPLETE SUPPORT AS WELL AS THAT OF ALL ELEMENTS OF THE COUNTRY TEAM. BOTH THIS EMBASSY AND THE CONSULATE GENERAL IN CASABLANCA ARE PREPARED TO COMMIT SUBSTANTIAL RESOURCES OF TIME AND ENERGY TO MAKE IT A SUCCESS.
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